

# Ghanaian tertiary graduates' perception of entrepreneurship education on employment opportunities

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## Abstract

This study focuses on whether entrepreneurship education increases entrepreneurial interest in students to set up new businesses. Entrepreneurship is a core course taken in the third year by all students of Ho Technical University. Out of the 1329 population of level 300 students of the 2016/2017 academic year, data were collected by convenience sampling from 325 (217 males and 108 females) with mean age of 24.75 years from 14 departments of four faculties. The students responded to 43-survey items derived from reviewed literature on a 5-Point Likert-Scale. It is concluded that more than 84% of the respondents agreed that entrepreneurship education informed students about entrepreneurship through the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge about acquisition of personal orientation, knowledge about business management principles and the availability of entrepreneurial support agencies. This shows that the students are highly confident of setting up their own businesses through the knowledge acquired. The study therefore has important implications for policy makers, management of tertiary institutions, students and educational evaluators on how to ensure that tertiary graduates set up entrepreneurship ventures in order to partially solve the unemployment problem in Ghana.

**Key Words:** practical skills, personal orientation, business management principles, entrepreneurial interest, support agencies.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The study is to find the effect of students' perception of entrepreneurship education on the employment of tertiary graduates. Hence every economy in the world is putting up procedures to encourage the growth and development of small and medium scale businesses as national development strategy to solve the unemployment problems (Ahlstrom and Bruton 2012; Abdullah and Bin Baker 2000).

Ghana has prioritized accelerated economic growth to enhance the well-being of its citizens through the provision of jobs. This therefore, demands that institutions provide relevant skills to their teeming youth and graduates so as to meet the demands of industry. Due to this developmental objectives, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP), the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) have at various national conferences called for the need to build strong and effective linkages between tertiary education and industry (Bawakyillenuo et al. 2013).

One of the ways in realizing this objective is the introduction of entrepreneurship education in tertiary education curriculum. This dream is achievable if the students of entrepreneurship have the attitude, creativity, innovation, prior knowledge and interest to actually execute this programme. Corroborating this statement, Wang and Wong (2004) who focused on personality traits of students pointed out that the entrepreneurial dreams of many students are slowed down by insufficient preparation towards effective entrepreneurship education and the push factor that moves young people to crave for entrepreneurial career (Henderson and Robertson 2000).

Riding on the back of this statement, Onuma (2016) indicated that entrepreneurship education has positive impact on entrepreneurial mentality of young people with respect to their entrepreneurial intentions, employability and finally on the role played in society and the economy. With the high unemployment rate of 16.9% (Ghana Statistical Service 2016), Ghana currently has a national self-employment and small enterprise initiatives agenda, with the hope that knowledge in entrepreneurship education will provide alternative conduits for graduate employment.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

There is always the talk about entrepreneurship education but not about how the subject is taught in our schools. According to Cooper et al. (2004), entrepreneurship education must shift from learning about entrepreneurship to practicing it. World Bank report states that Ghana's rising unemployment rate is a serious task that as many as 50% of graduates leaving Ghanaian universities and polytechnics could not find jobs for two years after national service, and 20% cannot find jobs for three years. This is likened to the situation in Kenya and Mozambique where majority of tertiary graduates depend on work in the informal sector, which is considered to be inclined to employment (Robb et al. 2014).

It is obvious that the current level of entrepreneurship education in Ghana is somehow insufficient to ensure entrepreneurial interest hence the need to practically concentrate on entrepreneurship education in our institutions (Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye 2015). One may now ask the questions, what is the essence of the entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions or how is this course taught and learnt? Is it designed to train students to actually establish their own businesses or it is meant to react to situations theoretically? Instructors in the universities are occasionally accused of being too academic and this position does not encourage

entrepreneurship sufficiently (Gibbs 1996), though it is clear that entrepreneurial education in institutions of higher learning is a surest way of acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills about entrepreneurship (Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye 2015).

To situate the traditional method of lecture-based learning, students are taught only about entrepreneurship, rather than teaching entrepreneurship with few activities that could be significant to the exact needs of students (Hunter 2012). This point is also buttressed by students offering entrepreneurship course converge under one roof to be taught by a lecturer who may not have any background in specific disciplines being offered by the students. In view of this, there are strong arguments among Ho Technical University staff that entrepreneurship education should be taught in each department of the various faculties in order to apply the entrepreneurship skills to departmental disciplines. Another issue is that graduating entrepreneurship students who may have acquired some knowledge in entrepreneurship have little or no skills on how to develop a farm, a mobile phone repairing shop, a barbering shop, a food service shop, or a research consulting firm. This action according to Hunter (2012), transcends to the inability of entrepreneurship teachers to focus on introducing technologies and programmes that potential entrepreneur will require to establish a new business.

Currently in Ghana, there is what is called “Unemployed Graduate Association” which may be a an offshoot of the educational system operated during pre and post-independence era, emphasizing liberal education rather than acquisition of vocational and technical skills that prepare school leavers and graduates with competencies for better employment opportunities. Thus, this makes the system focus on and produce unskilled graduates whose numbers are always rising every year without any proportionate provision of employment avenues (Onuma, 2016). Similarly, Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU 2007) posits that many graduates are unemployed because they chose wrong fields of study; quality of education not up to standard, lacked soft skills and their expectations are too high. Unemployment is high not only because there are no jobs at all but because youths, especially well educated ones, face a costly search process earlier in their career as they wish to wait for well-paid jobs in the formal sector (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, [UNECA] 2005).

### **Entrepreneurship at Ho Technical University**

Ho Technical University has started the entrepreneurship education since 1993 when the institution metamorphosed into a polytechnic from the then Technical Institute. The idea for the introduction of entrepreneurship at the time was to make polytechnic graduates employable. However, most of our graduates are still waiting to be employed in the formal sector. So the question is what has been the effect of entrepreneurship education on graduates’ perception of teaching and learning of the course on employment? The answer to this question may receive response from Adjei et al. (2014) in Darkwa and Nduro (2016) that even though students take a course in entrepreneurship, most of them do not desire to become entrepreneurs for multiple reasons. Alternatively, higher education and vocational institutions may not think about their personal needs, circumstances and situations, and develop curriculum that is based on these needs and publicize this new information through action and participatory programmes to the individuals who actually need it.

Initially the entrepreneurship course started in the second semester of the second year where student personality traits were identified at an early stage. The course in the second year is to ensure that students are made ready with the mindset to show interest and subsequently establishing their own businesses (Adjimah and Akli 2014). This arrangement according to Adjimah and Akli (2014) worked so well that in the first semester of the third year the students knew exactly what business ventures they could veer into. According to Hunter (2012), identifying psychological traits assist successful entrepreneurs to see opportunities that consist of other internal and external factors. He went on to say that the overall orientation, circumstance and personal objects also influence the behavior of entrepreneurs who have a number of positive and negative personality traits that will not direct behavior but be a subsidiary to behavior.

This necessitated the Entrepreneurship Development Unit (EDU) of the Liberal Studies Department to embark on a development project dubbed "From School into Business". In one of these projects, three (3) graduates from the Departments of Building Technology, Civil Engineering and Marketing worked on what is referred to as the Green City Business. They developed paving blocks, erosion checking and landscaping construction and maintenance business with support from the Unit.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Literature shows that entrepreneurship education and training arouse the interest of students to acquire entrepreneurial skills in order to establish their own businesses as a way of minimizing unemployment problems (Thandi and Shama 2004). This confirms the link between education and entrepreneurship (Galloway and Brown 2002; Gorman and Hanlon 1997; Henderson and Robertson 2000; Kolvereid and Moen 1997). Therefore getting sufficient education may ensure entrepreneurial intention of persons in establishing businesses. In Ghana entrepreneurship was not taught as a course in most tertiary institutions until recently (Adjimah 2011) however, there are a lot of activities that point to increasing interest and recognition in entrepreneurship education which may ultimately lead to employability of tertiary graduates. But what concrete steps have the Technical Universities taken to ensure that entrepreneurship education arouses entrepreneurial interest in tertiary students? Responses to the following questions will therefore be vital in this research:

1. Are contents considered in the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship education adequate to increase students' entrepreneurial interest?
2. How can it be demonstrated that entrepreneurship education is sufficient to arouse the interest of tertiary students in setting up their own businesses?
3. Do students have the psychological traits that will assist them to be successful entrepreneurs?

## **RESEARCH PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study as presented by the European Union (2002) is to find out if students are

- ready to embark on self-employment as a career option
- keen to promote the development of personal qualities such as creativity, risk taking and responsibility
- prepared to learn the technical and business skills that are relevant to entrepreneurship in order to start new business venture.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The importance of tertiary institutions in developing countries including Ghana is that entrepreneurship education is really an important means that encourages business start-ups among potential graduates (Galloway and Brown 2001). The paper is to investigate if the contents adopted in teaching and learning entrepreneurship education is sufficient. Secondly, it is to demonstrate if the contents arouse students' interest so as to afford graduates to set up their own businesses to partially solve the unemployment problem. Thirdly, the research is to find out if the students have psychological traits and how these assist them to be successful entrepreneurs.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Thandi and Shama (2004), posit that entrepreneurship course can certainly increase the level of students' skills on entrepreneurial activities in establishing their own businesses to minimize unemployment problems. Similarly, these findings support the argument of Garavan and O'Cinnede (1994) that educational training can influence the development of entrepreneurial activities. Currently the issue is how to deal with the already large number of unemployed Ghanaian graduates, and also find places for the new graduates into the labour market (Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye 2015). According to them, Ghanaian policies have aimed at strengthening the economic stability through the support for continued decline in poverty levels and designing a competitive business environment through entrepreneurship over the past decade.

### **What is Entrepreneurship?**

According Hunter (2012), some authors attempted to come out with a global definition of entrepreneurship and it appears they combined different themes such as creativity and innovation, taking initiative, entrepreneurial intention, ability to develop personal talents, ability to take risk, motivation to perceive, and taking decision and responsibility are high on the agenda. Wennekers and Thurik (1999), defined entrepreneurship as the identification of the readiness and capacity of individuals to notice and create new economic opportunities for products, production methods, organizational schemes and product-market combinations, and introduce innovative ideas in a market. According to them entrepreneurship is a business risk that is taken through the combination of ideas, skills, financial, material and human resources to satisfy business opportunities that are identified either in an existing enterprise or the creation of a new one in a market. Moving away from the behavioral and resources dimension to procedural aspect of entrepreneurship, Hisrich, Peters and Shepherd (2008) cited in Bamfo, Asiedu-Appiah and Oppong-Boakye (2015), defined entrepreneurship as "the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, social risk, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence". Lambing and Kuehl

(2007) in Afriyie and Boohene (2014), also defined entrepreneurship as involving an individual or group of individuals, an opportunity, an organization, risks taking and application of resources to create a new and profitable venture. Kelley et al (2010), also states that entrepreneurship is a source of providing income when economies cannot supply jobs that will generate salaries and wages and provide positive social value for its teeming youth.

The need to develop culture through entrepreneurship in developing countries not only as a means of job creation but also as a way of integrating entrepreneurial thinking and attitude into society that is not totally open to it is very paramount (Mohanty 2009). Liikanen (2004) in Afriyie and Boohene (2014), also intimated that entrepreneurial culture provides paybacks to society even beyond their business activities. The essence of entrepreneurship to the development and growth of the Ghanaian economy is that, small and medium scale businesses have been the substantive player in domestic activities as the sector is the large provider of employment opportunities. These businesses play a critical role not only at the local and community level but also at the national level as the engine of growth and development for the economy. This entrepreneurial function in economies makes it necessary for more support to ensure the reduction of poverty by contributing greatly to employment. Considering these definitions, entrepreneurship has to do with the acquisition of psychological traits skills by trained people who combine new ideas, risk and available resources (financial, materials and human) and getting the necessary support from industry players to setting up a business for the creation of wealth in an economy.

### **Who is an Entrepreneur?**

From the above definition of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs take high levels of risk to innovate and succeed in setting up businesses through the ability of managing the associated risks. Landau (2015) then proposed types of entrepreneurs that are categorized into four basic characteristics of innovation and risk bearing. Firstly, consolidators are persons who develop businesses on a low innovation, risk bearing platform and aim at consolidating and slowly improving on bringing the least returns. Secondly, gamblers are characterized by low degree of innovation and high level of risk and taking big opportunities in what is done but able to deliver through discoveries for success. Thirdly, the dreamer tries to combine high level of innovation with low level of risk, where without risk the dream cannot be comprehended. Fourthly, entrepreneurs are capable risk managers who neutralize risk through their knowledge and confidence about situations that others may see as high risk and that the amount of risk they are ready to take are circumstantial upon specific conditions. Hunter (2012) in his research has also focused on other types of entrepreneur as craftsmen with blue collar and limited educational background, who desire technical work and encouraged by want of personal autonomy. He went on to say that opportunists are well educated and motivated to build successful organizations and make financial gains whilst inventor-entrepreneur is an inventor-entrepreneur has a strong commitment for new product development and rapid market entry with an orientation towards the future.

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This research takes a closer look at the fourth definition for an entrepreneur by Landau as one who is capable of managing and neutralizing risks through knowledge and confidence. This conceptual framework is emphasized by

considering Hunter's proposition about an entrepreneur as one who is well educated and motivated. It is the acquisition of this knowledge and confidence that the potential entrepreneurs need to acquire from the entrepreneurship education from the institutions.

### **Entrepreneurship education and training**

In an educational setting, entrepreneurship education seeks to improve individual competency level as it attempts to make students to become more skilled and motivated to start and succeed in new ventures (Onuma 2016). For Bird (2002), a common concern among academics is to instill in students, the development of entrepreneurial competencies so as to prepare them for entrepreneurial life. Aderinwale in Bolarin (2012) further described entrepreneurship education as one that transverse the length of business formation, management, diversification and growth and ongoing processes that equip potential entrepreneurs with entrepreneurial skills. The European Union Commission (UNC) (2003), reported that the essence of entrepreneurship is to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in different types of setting. According to Isaac, Visser, Fridrick and Brijjal (2000) entrepreneurship is a purposeful intervention by educators in the life of learners to survive the world of business and has its focus on action orientation primarily embodied in teaching students how to develop a business plan (Ronstadt 1985); and ensuring that students are introduced to a number of practical-oriented activities and programmes.

So in a nutshell, entrepreneurship education, is that education which empowers the students to acquire professional and academic skills through practical training that gears towards the creation and establishment of a business venture. Robb et al. (2004) mentioned that a World Bank report has recognized entrepreneurship education and training as the catalyst that could stimulate innovation and promote jobs for university graduates especially in Sub-Saharan Africa where graduate unemployment rates are high. Supporting this assertion, Hunter (2012), indicated that entrepreneurship is the catalyst for creating employment, output growth, technological advancement, import substitution, improvement in the quality of products, export promotion and the supply of products at realistic prices to consumers.

Every year, thousands of graduates from tertiary institutions enter the job market to look for jobs that are non-existent. The difficulty is not just confronting the existing unemployed graduates but also absorbing the new graduates into the job market (Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye 2015). This may be due to the fact that training which is given to tertiary students does not fully equip them with the necessary skills needed to create jobs (Madumere-Obike 2006; Ahmaewhule 2007 and Nwangwu 2007 in Ekpoh and Edet 2011).

Through experiential learning, entrepreneurship capacity is built mostly by universities and polytechnics that influence career selection of learners to become an entrepreneur. Today, most institutions of higher learning spend large quantity of money designing practical entrepreneurship courses for their students (Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye 2015). This type of learning develops potential entrepreneurs who grow to become more efficient in managing business ventures (Vught 2006). These assertions may, however, not consider the fact that graduates need to have personal characteristics that will support the setting up of businesses. To this, Hunter (2012) posits that persons' general alignment, condition and individual intentions come into play in manipulating entrepreneurs' behaviors who have a number of positive and negative personality traits that will not direct behavior but can be a

subsidiary to behavior. It is imperative to know from this literature and others that entrepreneurship is pivoted around structured learning environment and tools that will support the system and individuals to develop the skills for entrepreneurship. In addition, these working tools which help develop the young graduates in entrepreneurship programmes in terms of their attitudes and skills and not theory that is backed with certificates. Consequently the teaching of entrepreneurship in our tertiary institutions which may be a panacea to the unemployment problem, must motivate the young graduate to combine perception and its explanation with his prior knowledge about creative ideas for product development.

In view of this, tertiary institutions have introduced entrepreneurship course or programme in order to reverse graduate unemployment by giving them the required skills to create new businesses in an attempt to consider self-employment as the sustainable career option (Ekpoh and Edet 2011). Entrepreneurship education therefore cultivates and arouses entrepreneurial processes that ensure the provision of tools, both tangible and intangible, necessary for starting new ventures (Postigo and Tomborini 2002). Clearly, understanding students' perception at higher level of education is an essential stage in this process. Academics also hold the views about what actually constitutes entrepreneurship programme; as to whether entrepreneurship must focus on creating organizations or growing firms or creating values, or innovating ideas for ownership (Vesper and Gartner 1997).

### **Entrepreneurial Interest**

In a broader outset, entrepreneurship has to do with the acquisition of skills by trained people who combine new ideas, risk and available resources (financial, materials and human) and getting the necessary support from industry players to setting up a business for the creation of wealth in an economy. Entrepreneurship education, according to this paper, is defined as "the whole set of education and training activities within the educational system that try to develop in the students intentions to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviors and show some of the elements that affect intentions, such as entrepreneurial knowledge, desirability of the entrepreneurial activity, or its feasibility" (Linan, 2004). Wilson, Kickul and Marlino (2007) found that entrepreneurship education increases students' interest in becoming entrepreneurs and Illesanmi (2000) confirmed that entrepreneurial education is capable of creating entrepreneurs to have the ability to seek and find business opportunities in their environment. In line with this, Onoriode and Ajokporise (2006) substantiated the efficacy of entrepreneurial education that entrepreneurial interest and performance alleviate poverty and create jobs that leads to employability.

Fayolle (2005) thought that entrepreneurship course or programme produce more entrepreneurship graduates which consequently leads to greater number of students willing to set up their own businesses. This finding is in agreement with Kolvereid and Moen (1997) that graduates who read entrepreneurship are more likely to start new businesses and had stronger entrepreneurial intention than other graduates. Bird (1998) define intentionality as the state of mind that directs a person's attention, experience and action towards specific goal so as to achieve something. Therefore, entrepreneurial action can be classified as an intentional behavior (Bird, 1988; Shapero and Sokol 1982) or intention as a predictor of planned entrepreneurial behavior (Krueger, 1993). Shapero and Sokol (1982) indicated that entrepreneurial intention emanates from the perception of feasibility and desirability of a person that is affected by the cultural and social factors.



Data on the study of the effect of entrepreneurship education on students' interest for self-employability at Ho Technical University were analyzed based on the syllabus which specify support agencies, management principles, personal orientation and practical skills as its contents.

#### Entrepreneurial Support Agencies

Introduction of entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions with particular reference to Technical Universities is as a result of the overwhelming problems with unemployment in the country. In this direction, the establishment of entrepreneurial support agencies by government has necessitated the need for most tertiary institutions to roll out entrepreneurship education to train students to acquire some skills for establishing small businesses after school. In spite of these development there are still graduates in the country who do not have jobs and are always looking for the normal white collar jobs which are not existent. This may be due to the fact that most of the students do not have the idea about how these support agencies work for them to seek assistance. This notwithstanding, the Ghanaian economy is yet to achieve the structural transformation required to move the nation into a state of modern, industrialized and prosperous economy through entrepreneurial activities, though Ghanaian entrepreneurs painted a glooming picture about the business environment because they felt strongly that the regulatory set-up was not favorable to the development of local entrepreneurship (Darkwa and Nduro 2016). According to them, the local entrepreneurs intimated that the high interest rates, high taxes and the fact that government policies favour foreign enterprises such that they are always out of business.

In line with this, there are entrepreneurial support agencies such as Export Development and Investment Fund (EDIF), Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology Industrial Service (GRATIS), Ghana Enterprise Development Commission (GEDC), Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC), National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) now Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA), Youth Enterprise Support (YES), Local Enterprises and Skills Development Programme (LESDEP) and National Board for Small Scale Businesses (NBSSI), but entrepreneurs felt that policy makers are not doing much to support them through the provision of key infrastructural investment such as roads, water sources and electricity supply (Darkwa and Nduro 2016).

Corruption and bureaucratic impairments to accessing the support services from these agencies are shrouded in secrecy with the "whom you know" syndrome leading to unethical activities which make potential entrepreneur shy away from establishing their own businesses. In addition, registering and licensing businesses at the Registrar's General Department and the District Assemblies and other regulatory bodies are also cited as barriers as "goro boys" invade these premises.

#### Business Management Principles

Providing training to small businesses is a strong element that ensures the development and growth of businesses and promotes the skillfulness and capabilities of participants and also maximizes the business profitability for that matter (Jennings and Banfield 1993). Banks in developing countries take advantage of this training programme and help to build capacity for entrepreneurs by introducing them to topics such as preparing business plans, book keeping, marketing strategies, effective loan application, effective human resource and customer service managements (Bylon Abeeku Bamfo et al. 2015).

Arguably, persons endowed with entrepreneurial skills through entrepreneurial education, acquire and utilize strategic, planning, market penetration, communication and negotiation skills among others to establish new businesses (Onuma 2016). This also encompasses knowledge of entrepreneurial skills and competencies in office management, finance, marketing which are relevant when starting any business venture (Dei-Tumi 2011). The growth of any business also depends on interpersonal paradigm which is almost directly influenced by how large an opportunity a person may have and its dependence on his ability to communicate, collaborate and work with other staff, satisfy customers' needs and even exceeds customers' expectation. In their model, Harrison and Leitch (1994) hinted that entrepreneurship education should be approached as a sub-set of general management, the second as differentiating entrepreneurship from the management of large-scale organization and the third to provide a basis for reintegrating management education and entrepreneurship education. The seven quality management principles in ISO 9000, emphasis customer focus, leadership, engagement of people, process approach, continuous improvement, evidence-based decision making, and relationship management as mentioned by previous literature are incorporated into the entrepreneurship syllabus of Ho Technical University. These are vital parameters that support the measurement of academic instruction of entrepreneurship course in this research. It is in line with this that Ho Technical University students are introduced to business management principles, practical-oriented skills, entrepreneurial support agencies and personal paradigms or orientation, as a way of sensitizing students on is required when they decide to be become entrepreneurs.

#### Effective Practical Skills

Success in entrepreneurship is not just about having a great business idea or better product to sell, though it may guarantee success. However, whether the success extends to the long term depends on certain practical skills. An [entrepreneur](#) may naturally possess some of these skills with respect to the other essential skills, but he is expected to cultivate some by himself. Once cultivated or learnt, the skills may have to be adapted to changing business environments to keep the entrepreneur from lagging behind. In a growth-conscious world, entrepreneurship is to stimulate growth, so Baumol (1968) stated that 'we can try to learn how one can stimulate the volume and intensity of entrepreneurial capacity activity'. This statement should become important for policy makers and academicians to focus on the question of why some people choose an entrepreneurial career and others do not. (Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye 2015).

Lecturers and students partnering with industry in applying different pedagogical approaches in entrepreneurial educational studies is vital in the teaching and learning process of entrepreneurial education. This approach emphasizes simulation, role play and experimentation, thus exposing students to grasp close to reality experiences. This opportunity will also expose students and lecturers to successfully practising business people who would share their experiences on regular basis and at the same time serve as ideal training ground for job creation (Dei-Tumi 2011). With such competencies, potential entrepreneurs will be in position to create employment opportunities, reduce high level of unemployment among the youths (Onuma 2016) where tertiary institutions play key roles as entrepreneurial nucleus, connecting researchers, students, entrepreneurs, business enterprises and other stakeholders (Afriyie and Boohene 2014). In another instance, entrepreneurship objectives are aimed at changing students' behaviors with the idea of making them understand entrepreneurship and for them to become

entrepreneurs which will result in the creation of new businesses as well new job opportunities (Fayolle and Gailly 2005).

#### Personal Orientation

Personal talents, abilities, skills and intelligence assist a person to pursue his life goals according to his interest, motivation and temperament enabling him to initiate physical or mental things which are developed through learning. However, wrong attitude and temperament which encompass the ability to manage talent and maintain perseverance may cause many talented careers to fail (Hunter 2012). Linking personal talents, abilities and temperament closely with personal creativity, the potential young entrepreneur has a great role to play in managing self if he wants to succeed in his entrepreneurial venture. The fact therefore is that personal qualities such as creativity, innovation and spirit of initiative are useful to everyone in their working activities and daily lives (Afriyie and Boahene 2014).

Gibbs and Lyapunov (1996) in Afriyie and Boohene, suggest that an entrepreneurial culture such as beliefs, values, attitudes and behavioral norms need to be cultivated to support SMEs. Afriyie and Boohene also confirm that entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial culture are instruments that make an individual act in a particular manner. Thus the student who desires to be an entrepreneur must exhibit entrepreneurial alertness which is the ability to be sensitive to information about objects, incidents and patterns in the environment where ideas and possible opportunities can be constructed (Hunter 2012). Hunter again hypothesized that motives push people to perceive, think and act in specific ways that attempt to satisfy needs. This he said, often stays unconscious in a person, as the person does not know exactly what he wants. However, these motives remain powerful influence behind his thoughts, feelings and behaviors. He continues to say that the element of creativity which again expresses itself through other aspects and talents is a competence that gives a person the ability to make connections between unrelated things, thus creating new ideas, concepts through what is called innovation.

Raposo and Paco (2000) cited in Afriyie and Boohene (2014), discovered that entrepreneurship education is not just about teaching someone to run a business but also about encouraging creative thinking and promoting a strong sense of self-worth and empowerment that is desirable for economic growth and development. Those who are extrovert and have leadership qualities are able to bring others on board and tend to acquire knowledge they themselves lack (Hunter 2012). This explains that those who wish to build a large organization can do so if they tend to trust others who may be more open for creativity and innovation in a bid to expanding the organization or otherwise deciding to work by oneself and have a small organization because of mistrust.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This is a quantitative research with data collected through a survey mechanism. The 2016/2017 level 300 students were considered for this survey because the entrepreneurship course is taken in the first and second semesters at this level. Adopting convenience sampling method, a sample size of 325 students (217 males and 108 females) were taken out of the 1332 total population of level 300 students in Ho Technical University at a significant level of 5%. Convenience sampling technique was employed because participants from the population were those that were readily available at the time of administering the questionnaire during the revision week for the end of the

second semester examinations. The questionnaire had two sections: A- Demography of students, Students' business relationship and experience and Parents' business experience; Section B comprises Personal Orientation, Entrepreneurial Interest and Entrepreneurship Education and Training which required knowledge on Practical Skills, Support Agencies, Business Management Principles and Personal Orientation as the sub-headings. Responses to this section were obtained on a 5-point likert-scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with a score of 5 treated as strongly agree.

## **ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

Two (2) National Service Persons who were well-briefed were engaged to administer the self-designed 43-survey item derived from reviewed from literature (Hunter 2012; Adjei, Pinkrah, and Denanyoh 2014; Denanyoh, Adjei, and Nyemekye 2015) to the students in their various departments after the items were pretested on seventy (70) students and ten (10) National Service Persons to correct some items that were ambiguous and remove those that did not have any impact on the subject matter. Two (2) staffs of the University subsequently validated the items and found them very suitable for the research. A mean score of greater than or equal to three (3) is associated with an agreement whereas a mean score of less than three (3) is considered as a disagreement (Kubiszyn and Borich 1996). The reliability test of the research items used the internal consistency technique by employing Cronbach Alpha Coefficient which has a reliability coefficient of 0.923 at 5% significant level as indicated below. Using the SPSS 20.0 version for the analysis, the high coefficient implies a high consistency among the measured variables.

### **Sections A**

Results from the research show that out of the sample size of 325 students, the male constituted 66.8% and the females constituting 33.2% with a mean age of 24.8. Seventy-three percent of the respondents' mother have one-woman business whilst 36.3% of the respondents' father have a one-man business but only 42% help someone to do business. Meanwhile Wang and Wong (2004) explained that entrepreneurial interest of students in Singapore is based on family business experience and educational level. Other studies, such as Henderson and Robertson (2000) and Denanyoh, Adjei and Nyemekye (2015) showed that family was a factor influencing career choice of students, after their personal experience. Students, however, did not take advantage of their parents' businesses to enhance their entrepreneurial interest and skills even though they admitted to possess the qualities of and psychological traits for entrepreneurship. In addition, seventy-five percent of the students do not run any small business of their own and 58% do not help anyone to run small businesses. This result contradicts Scott and Twoney (1988) assertion that parental influence and work experience are significant factors for one to become an entrepreneur, therefore students of Ho Technical University deviate from being entrepreneurs. Furthermore, only thirty-five percent of respondents attended an entrepreneurship fair organized by the institution on 23rd May, 2017, an indication that students did not consider this fair as a vital ingredients in becoming an entrepreneur. Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) was one of the clubs and societies that existed on campus. In 2009, SIFE won the National Tertiary Entrepreneurship competition for two consecutive times and represented Ghana in Germany. Currently, there are no clubs and societies on campus that encourage students to go into entrepreneurship after school, so

students do not have any experience in peer business relationships. However, Ngosiane (2010) in his work on promoting an entrepreneurial culture in Kenya, revealed that entrepreneurship education can help promote entrepreneurial culture through the formation of clubs on the various university campuses (Afriyie and Boohene 2014).

## **Section B**

### ***Personal Orientation***

At least 92% of the sampled students agreed to the fact they possess personal orientation for embarking on entrepreneurship activities. Personal orientation was measured by items such as “I am motivated to perceive, think and act in specific ways to satisfy business needs (93%); I am sensitive to information about objects, incidents and patterns in the environment where ideas and opportunities can be constructed (93%); I make connections among unrelated things to create new ideas and concepts through innovation (95%); I discover and relate incoming information/opportunity with familiar knowledge already known (95%); I like taking initiative after a decision (91%); I have natural aptitudes, abilities, skills and intelligence to help me pursue my life goals (85%); I am able to communicate, collaborate, and work with others (90%)”. According to Hunter (2012), personal paradigm act to shape or handle information going into the psyche where intellectual decision take place. This personal orientation, with particular attributes on how one sees an opportunity, get it appraised and acts upon it has great influence over decision making and behavior. In fact, personal qualities such as creativity, innovation and spirit of initiative that are relevant to entrepreneurship can be useful to everyone in their working activities and daily lives (Afriyie and Boohene 2014). From the above results and discussion, students have psychological traits that assist them to be successful entrepreneurs. (See results in Appendix I on page 33)

### ***Entrepreneurial Interest***

Even though 35 % of the sampled students did not attend the entrepreneurship fair organized by the school, 75% did not own personal businesses and only 42% helped someone to do business, more than 89% of them agreed to all items that measured entrepreneurial interest such as “setting up a business is one of my interests/targets (95%); I want to be an employer in the future (92%); I have seen myself becoming an entrepreneur in the future (96%); I am ready to face challenges in sustaining a new business (94%); I don’t fear to take business risk (89%); unavailability of start-up capital does not scare me of becoming an entrepreneur (91%); I know that entrepreneurship is one of the solutions to my unemployment problem (93%)” shows that the students have acquired some level of knowledge that can propel them in establishing business ventures. These results therefore confirm the findings of a study conducted by Ekpoh and Edet (2011) that entrepreneurship education impacts positively on entrepreneurial intentions of tertiary students which leads to an increase in the level of students’ knowledge in entrepreneurial processes.

The results are statistically significant indicating that entrepreneurship education is sufficient to arouse the entrepreneurial interest of tertiary students to establish their own businesses. (See results in Appendix I).

## **Entrepreneurial Education**

#### Transmission of information on effective teaching and learning mechanism

More than 85% of the respondents agreed that the lecturer adopted effective transmission mechanism in entrepreneurship education. This is measured using items such as “the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship gives me the desire to establish a business (85%); my lecturer challenged me to prepare business plans (90%); the lecturer relates the entrepreneurship to my area of specialization/programme (91 %); the practical input for the teaching and learning entrepreneurship course is adequate (86%)”. To give credence to this result Adjei, Pinkrah and Denanyoh (2014) found that entrepreneurial support, appropriate teaching methods and exposure to rich course contents were the factors that support starting up businesses by graduates.

#### Transmission of information on Management Principles

Not less than 89% of the students agreed that introduction to the principles of management in entrepreneurship is appropriate. This principle is measured by items such as “ my lecturer taught me how to advertise products and/or services of a business (91%); I was taught about how to market products or services to targeted audience (89%); my lecturer introduced me to keeping account books (88%); the lecturer mentioned how to relate with customers when I set up a business (91%); the lecturer took me through the culture of organizations and its development (91%); the lecturer mentioned the need on how to relate to staff in an enterprise (92%); I was introduced to risk factors that is associated with entrepreneurship (91%)”.

#### Transmission of information on Entrepreneurial Support Agencies

Not less than 87% of the students agreed that the lecturer introduced them to entrepreneurial support agencies which was measured by “the lecturer introduced me to some regulatory agencies to support my desire in entrepreneurship (84%); my lecturer told me about the financial support agencies for my entrepreneurship activity (87%); I am informed about technical/professional support agencies to set up a business (89%)”.

#### Information on acquiring psychological traits

Not less than 94% of the students agreed that the lecturer made them aware that psychological traits is a factor in entrepreneurship which was measured by items such as “the lecturer told me that creativity and innovation have bearing on entrepreneurship (95%); The course reveals that prior knowledge into an idea is a factor in entrepreneurship (94%); I have been informed that entrepreneurial intention is vital in establishing a business (94%)”.

Therefore, all the four parameters on the content of entrepreneurship education are statistically significant at alpha level of 0.05, hence the course exposed students’ knowledge in entrepreneurship. (See results in Appendix I on page 35).

## CONCLUSION

It is therefore concluded that though students according to the study did not exhibit personal involvement in entrepreneurial activities such as having personal businesses, helping people with business ventures, not attending entrepreneurship fairs and not belonging to entrepreneurial clubs

- i. the instructional method adopted by the lecturer in teaching and learning entrepreneurship in relation to the contents exposes them to knowledge for establishing businesses.
- ii. entrepreneurship education is sufficient to arouse the entrepreneurial interest of tertiary students to create and sustain their own businesses.
- iii. they possess psychological traits (personal orientation) that will assist them to go into entrepreneurship.

### **LIMITATIONS**

Questionnaire were administered when students were preparing to write their second semester examinations. It is therefore believed that respondents may not have taken their time to answer the items in the questionnaire which may affect the results.

### **RECOMMENDATION AND WAY FORWARD**

Based on the strong concluding points from the research, it is indicative that graduates of the Technical Universities over the years have what it takes to enter into entrepreneurship though they did not take advantage of existing opportunities that are available. A further research will therefore be conducted to find out if tertiary graduates are really taking advantage of this rich knowledge and skills imparted to them by the lecturers to set up business ventures or if there are any other mitigating factors that are hindering the setting up of business ventures. This further research will also consider to finding out why they fail to take advantage of the existing opportunities. Since entrepreneurship education helps to promote entrepreneurial culture the formation of clubs on the various university campuses needs to be taken seriously.

Also, students must be encouraged to help friends and families who are into small businesses and take industrial attachment as a serious entrepreneurial and professional venture. To this end, any attempt by students to engage in some kind of small businesses should attract marks that must be factored into the students' final grade point average and industrial attachment marks should be computed into the Final Cumulative Grade Point Average (FCGPA) of the student.

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## Appendix I

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.923	33

**Personal Orientation**

**Binomial Test**

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
X11	Group 1	<= 2	21	.07	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	300	.93		
	Total		321	1.00		
X12	Group 1	<= 2	23	.07	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	294	.93		
	Total		317	1.00		
X13	Group 1	<= 2	26	.08	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	292	.92		
	Total		318	1.00		
X14	Group 1	<= 2	23	.07	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	288	.93		
	Total		311	1.00		
X15	Group 1	<= 2	21	.07	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	295	.93		
	Total		316	1.00		
X16	Group 1	<= 2	16	.05	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	299	.95		
	Total		315	1.00		
X17	Group 1	<= 2	15	.05	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	295	.95		
	Total		310	1.00		

# **Entrepreneurial Interest**

## **Binomial Test**

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
X18	Group 1	<= 2	15	.05	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	306	.95		
	Total		321	1.00		
X19	Group 1	<= 2	25	.08	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	297	.92		
	Total		322	1.00		
X20	Group 1	<= 2	13	.04	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	309	.96		
	Total		322	1.00		
X21	Group 1	<= 2	20	.06	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	303	.94		
	Total		323	1.00		
X22	Group 1	<= 2	36	.11	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	285	.89		
	Total		321	1.00		
X23	Group 1	<= 2	29	.09	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	293	.91		
	Total		322	1.00		
X24	Group 1	<= 2	24	.07	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	297	.93		
	Total		321	1.00		

# **Entrepreneurial Education**

## **Binomial Test**

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
Effective Teaching						
X25	Group 1	<= 2	120	.38	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	193	.62		
	Total		313	1.00		
X26	Group 1	<= 2	46	.15	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	270	.85		
	Total		316	1.00		
X27	Group 1	<= 2	33	.10	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	283	.90		
	Total		316	1.00		
X28	Group 1	<= 2	27	.09	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	289	.91		
	Total		316	1.00		
X29	Group 1	<= 2	43	.14	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	272	.86		
	Total		315	1.00		
Support Agencies						
X30	Group 1	<= 2	52	.16	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	265	.84		
	Total		317	1.00		
X31	Group 1	<= 2	42	.13	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	270	.87		
	Total		312	1.00		
X32	Group 1	<= 2	33	.11	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	278	.89		
	Total		311	1.00		
Management Principles						
X33	Group 1	<= 2	29	.09	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	284	.91		
	Total		313	1.00		
X34	Group 1	<= 2	33	.11	.50	.000
	Group 2	> 2	277	.89		

	Total		310	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	38	.12	.50	.000
X53	Group 2	> 2	277	.88		
	Total		315	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	27	.09	.50	.000
X36	Group 2	> 2	289	.91		
	Total		316	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	29	.09	.50	.000
X37	Group 2	> 2	285	.91		
	Total		314	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	26	.08	.50	.000
X38	Group 2	> 2	291	.92		
	Total		317	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	27	.09	.50	.000
X39	Group 2	> 2	288	.91		
	Total		315	1.00		
	<b>Psychological Traits</b>					
	Group 1	<= 2	16	.05	.50	.000
X40	Group 2	> 2	301	.95		
	Total		317	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	18	.06	.50	.000
X41	Group 2	> 2	300	.94		
	Total		318	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	18	.06	.50	.000
X42	Group 2	> 2	298	.94		
	Total		316	1.00		
	Group 1	<= 2	52	.16	.50	.000
X43	Group 2	> 2	264	.84		
	Total		316	1.00		